

# DVR

DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION

## Guide to Services



*Washington State*  
Department of Social  
& Health Services

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**DVR** Division  
of Vocational  
Rehabilitation

# DVR Mission

The mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is “to empower individuals with disabilities to achieve a greater quality of life by obtaining and maintaining employment.” Employment contributes to a person’s ability to live independently, and DVR believes that every person has the right to work.

With offices statewide, DVR has been a partner with Washington State’s communities for over 70 years. As a division of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), DVR is designed to help meet the employment needs of people with disabilities and of businesses who hire people with disabilities.

We hope you will find the staff and services provided by DVR a key to reaching your goal of employment. Providing our customers with quality service is our top priority. DVR is always looking for ways to improve services. We value your feedback and your comments. If you have questions or need information, a customer service representative is available to assist you Monday - Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm by calling 1-800-637-5627 (V/TTY) or you can visit us on the Worldwide Web at [www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr](http://www1.dshs.wa.gov/dvr).



DVR Customer  
Liz Halperin with  
her Guide Dog

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## Equal Access to Services

It is the policy of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation that no person shall be subjected to discrimination by DVR or its contractors because of race, color, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, status as a disabled veteran or Vietnam Era veteran or based on the presence of any physical, mental or sensory disability.

To request this publication in an alternative format, please call 1-800-637-5627 (Voice/TTY).

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## Confidentiality

Information you provide to DVR is kept confidential. Information is shared with others only with your written consent, except in very limited circumstances, involving your health or safety. Additional specific consent from you is required to release any information pertaining to: diagnosis or treatment for substance abuse; or testing, diagnosis or treatment of sexually transmitted diseases; diagnosis or treatment for HIV/AIDS.

*DVR creates new possibilities for people with disabilities to access more job opportunities.*

Pictured, DVR Customer  
Greg Maloney



## Is DVR right for you?

### Do you want to work?

If you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to get or keep a job, and you want to work, the Washington State Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) can help.

### What is DVR?

DVR is a statewide resource for people with disabilities. We assist individuals with disabilities in getting and keeping a job. DVR is a state and federally-sponsored program. DVR works in partnership with the community and businesses to develop employment opportunities for people with disabilities.

### Who does DVR serve?

DVR may serve you if you:

- 1) Have a physical or mental disability that makes it difficult to get a job or keep a job that matches your skills, potential, and interest.
- 2) Need services and support, such as counseling, training, or assistance with a job search, in order to get or keep a job.

### How can DVR help me go to work?

DVR staff will help you get the information you need to make a good decision about:

- What type of job you want
- Steps needed to reach your goal of going to work

With support from DVR, you will:

- Design and carry out a step-by-step plan to reach your employment goals.

### How do I get started with DVR?

To learn more about how to get started, contact DVR to set up an appointment. DVR has offices in many cities across Washington to serve you. Call 1-800-637-5627 Voice/TTY to find the office closest to where you live.

If you need a service to help you when you arrive at a DVR office, such as an interpreter or translator, or if you need information in another format, such as large print or Braille, please explain your needs when you contact DVR for an appointment.



DVR  
Customer  
and Oscar  
Nominated  
Art Director,  
Christopher  
Freeman

## The Rehabilitation Process

### Orientation/Application

- DVR will provide you with information about vocational rehabilitation services.
- You must complete an Application with DVR before services can begin.
- Your application will be reviewed by a DVR counselor to determine if you are eligible for DVR services.

### Eligibility

You are eligible for DVR services if you:

- Have a physical or mental disability that results in a substantial barrier to employment; AND
- You require vocational rehabilitation services to get or keep a job.

Your DVR counseling team collects records to document your identity, disability, and work status. If no records about your disability exist, you may need to complete medical examinations or tests to verify or support eligibility.

### Possible Delay in Services

By law, when DVR cannot serve everyone who is eligible for and wants services, it must determine the order in which people are served based on disability-related criteria. A DVR counselor evaluates the eligibility information that identifies limitations resulting from your disability. Based on that review, the VR counselor determines a priority level.

The priority levels are:

**PRIORITY 1** Individual with most severe disabilities

**PRIORITY 2** Individual with severe disabilities

**PRIORITY 3** Individual with disabilities

**Important:** Depending on the date of your application and the priority level currently being served, your name may be placed on a waiting list for services. This may result in a delay in services for some applicants.

If your priority level is currently being served, you may transition or proceed into Vocational Assessment without being placed on a waiting list.



*"The possibility of making an impact on someone's life is truly rewarding!"*

DVR Intern,  
Jamila Jackson



## Vocational Assessment

You and a DVR counselor explore types of jobs that best match your interest and strengths. You will review:

- Your strengths, abilities and interests;
- Your work history and skills;
- Information about local job market trends.

Or you may complete:

- Interest and/or aptitude tests; or
- Job try-outs.

## Plan for Employment

The DVR counselor offers ongoing counseling, guidance, and support as you get or keep a job, this may include:

- Selecting a job goal;
- Writing a plan that outlines what steps and services you need to reach your job goal; and
- Beginning to work on the activities outlined in your plan that may include:
  - Training and Education
  - Conducting a job search
  - Researching job-related resources and referrals
  - Job search training
  - Resumé and interview techniques
  - Job placement assistance
  - Support in keeping a job

## Successfully Employed

- After you get a job, DVR will maintain contact with you for at least 90 days to make sure the job is a good match.
- After 90 days, if you are doing well on the job and no other services are needed, you and a DVR counselor decide when to close your case.

## Post Employment

- If you need assistance after a case is closed as successfully employed, DVR can reopen the case and provide assistance to help you keep your job, or assist you with reapplying for DVR services.
- If a job is lost, DVR can help you find a similar job.



*When he's not sharing his personal triumphs over a near fatal car accident, Paul enjoys working outdoors.*

TBI survivor and DVR Customer Paul Dressel

## Working in Partnership with DVR

If you are eligible for DVR services, you will be working in a very important partnership with your Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor (VRC) and a team of rehabilitation professionals to reach the goal of employment. Other rehabilitation professionals will team with you as needed to provide the services you need to go to work.

### The role of the DVR team is to:

- Gather data and work with you in evaluating the pros and cons of different vocational options.
- Provide professional vocational rehabilitation counseling that helps you decide upon a vocational goal.
- Support you in getting and keeping a job.
- Coordinate the services you need to achieve your goals.
- Give you support and honest feedback.

DVR's goal is to help you go to work!

### Can I invite someone to be part of the team?

You are in control of your rehabilitation process; please invite anyone you would like to be part of your team.

### Your role in the partnership is:

- To actively participate throughout the rehabilitation process.
- To use the information gathered throughout the rehabilitation process to make decisions that will lead to your employment.
- To develop and carry out a rehabilitation plan that will successfully lead you to employment.

Remember you are the KEY to your success.

### What makes a partnership work well?

Several things will help you create an effective partnership with your DVR counselor and rehabilitation team.

- Maintain close contact. Notify DVR if you move or have a new telephone number.
- Express your ideas, feelings, and concerns.
- Follow through with activities and agreements.
- Talk to your counselor about any significant changes in your life that might affect your plan to go to work.



*"My partnership with DVR has been a very successful journey."*  
Arielle Belo  
with friend  
Rosemarie  
Rodriguez



## The Choice is Yours

You have the right to make decisions about your vocational rehabilitation program and services that will help you go to work. DVR believes that making important decisions about going to work is the best way for you to invest in your future and reach your goals.

You can count on DVR to respect your opinions and to assist you as you make important decisions about going to work.

### What decisions do I make?

You make decisions throughout the rehabilitation process with the help and assistance of DVR staff. You will make many important decisions, including:

- What type of job you want
- The steps you need to take to prepare for the job
- What services you need to go to work
- Where to get the services

### What if I need help making decisions?

DVR gives you the help you need to make good decisions. You may also ask any member of your rehabilitation team, or someone important in your life to help you at anytime.



Police Officer  
for the Colville  
Confederated  
Tribe and DVR  
Customer,  
Roger Gillaspy

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*"Your power shines when  
you do what you love."*

Successful Seattle Artist and  
DVR Customer Lupita Cano

## Services Available from DVR

### What types of services does DVR offer?

DVR offers a variety of services to assist people with disabilities to prepare for, get, and keep jobs. The services you use depend on your individual needs and circumstances.

DVR can provide you with the information necessary to assist you in deciding which services you need to reach your job goal. Examples of services include:

**Assessment services** to measure your strengths, capabilities, work skills, and interests. These services assist you in selecting a job goal and the DVR services you need to reach that goal.

**Counseling and guidance services** provided throughout the rehabilitation process to help you make good decisions about how to reach your goals.

**Independent living services** to help you understand and deal with disability issues that prevent you from working; these include, but are not limited to:

- Training in self-care
- Money management
- Using community transportation

**Assistive technology services** help you remove communication and/or physical barriers that may keep you from getting and keeping the job you want. These may include such devices as hearing aids, visual aids, or special computer software. You can explore with your counselor how technology might help you reach your employment potential.

**Training services** to provide you with work skills needed to achieve your employment goal.

**Job placement** to help you carry out your job search, including:

- Assistance completing application forms
- Developing a resume
- Practicing interview skills, and identifying job leads



*Michael appreciates DVR for the assistive devices they helped with to provide him greater access at work.*

DVR Customer,  
Michael Rogers

## Paying for DVR Services

### Who pays for DVR services?

DVR recognizes that each individual financial situation is unique. Before finalizing an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE), you are required to disclose information about your financial resources and liabilities. Though we look at all resources available to help you pay for services, you may be asked to complete a financial statement form to establish whether you meet DVR's financial need criteria.

While DVR offers a wide range of services, we can not pay for routine living expenses (e.g., rent, food). Your counselor will discuss this with you in detail.

If you are currently receiving SSI, SSDI, or DSHS Public Assistance, you are not expected to pay for DVR services, however you must verify the assistance you receive.

### Are there DVR services I can get without helping pay?

DVR provides some services regardless of your financial status, including:

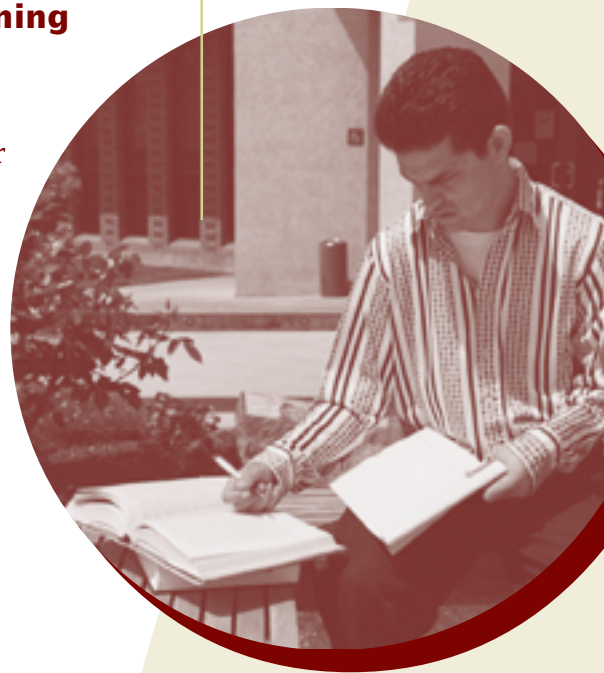
- Assessment services needed to determine eligibility or to develop an Individualized Plan for Employment.
- Counseling, guidance, and referral services
- Job placement and retention services
- Interpreter services

### What if I want to attend a college or training program?

DVR can support a college education or training program needed to help you gain new work skills. You must apply for financial aid and grants before DVR pays for training-related expenses at a college. Ask your DVR counselor for more details.

*"Thanks to DVR, I am going to finish college and pursue my career goals."*

DVR Customer,  
Leandro Razo



## Customer Rights

At DVR we want to see everyone reach their employment goals. However, at times challenging circumstances can arise during the rehabilitation process.

At any time during the rehabilitation process, if you do not agree with a decision made regarding your services from DVR, you have several options available to resolve the disagreement.

- 1) Talk with your VR counselor
- 2) Talk with the VR supervisor
- 3) Talk with the DVR Director or designee
- 4) Seek assistance from the Client Assistance Program (CAP) by calling,  
1-(800)544-2121 Voice  
1-(888)721-6072 TTY  
[www.capseattle.org](http://www.capseattle.org)
- 5) Request mediation, and/or
- 6) Request a fair hearing

Any DVR staff person can provide you with further information about the above options including contact information.



*"DVR didn't look at my age when I walked in the door, they looked at my possibilities and my future."*

Photographer  
and DVR Customer,  
Bob Boldman

## Notes

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*Exploring new  
project opportunities.*

DVR Customer Sandra  
Carr, who is deaf,  
discussing a Vocational  
Evaluation report with  
her TESH supervisor,  
Robert Cornell.



## Notes

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*Seiji is able to pursue his dream of becoming a successful photographer with the encouragement and support of DVR.*

DVR Customer Seiji Franklin





*Success with  
his mini donut  
business is just  
the beginning for  
Trepp and the  
Bainbridge Island  
Special Needs  
Foundation.*

DVR Customer Trepp  
Hanseth with his  
teacher Shelly Long



## **DVR** Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

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